

AN OPEN LETTER.

Respectfully Addressed to a Minister of Several Kinds of Gospel.

TOPEKA, September 22, 1894.

Rev. A. S. Embree:

DEAR SIR:—I observe in the State Journal of September 19, an interview with you which I, as a Populist, do not propose to pass unchallenged. I will grant you at the beginning that the statements as they there appear may not be just as you would have made them in a written communication. Perhaps you may have been misquoted in some things. For your own credit I hope this is the case. I have nothing from which to judge, however, but the interview itself, and if, in regarding that as correct, I am led to do you any injustice I shall be only too willing to afford you the opportunity to make such correction as you may wish to make.

I shall not attempt to follow the order of subjects as they appear in the interview, because you refer to the same subject in different parts of it. I shall merely select such points as I wish to criticize.

You say "the present administration is the result, not so much of republicanism, as it is of the Humphreys and Bill Higginess and that class of politicians bringing the party into disrepute." Permit me to suggest, my dear sir, that you have not discovered the cause that resulted in the present administration, nor will you be likely to discover it until you go out from your wealthy and aristocratic church, and mingle for a time with the common people, the men and woman who have to depend upon their daily toil for their daily bread. Leave your upholstered pulpit, my dear sir, long enough to go down among this class of people and see how they live. Go learn from their pale lips how they have lost their places in the factories and shops, and mines, and upon the great transportation lines of the country—how the opportunity to earn a living has departed from them, and how, day by day, they see their loved ones suffering for the most common necessities of life which they are unable to buy. Then go out among the farmers of the country and see the wheat, the corn, the cattle and hogs that they have in abundance and are unable to sell, in many instances, for what it has cost to produce them. Comprehend, if you can, that in this land, overflowing with an abundance of everything that is needed to give comfort and happiness to every man, woman and child within our borders, there are millions who are literally starving to-day because their willing hands can find no work to do. If you can once bring yourself to a comprehension of these conditions, then inquire into their causes; and if you inquire honestly you will discover why this administration exists and why the People's party exists. I cannot discuss these questions within the limits of this letter. I can only make a few suggestive observations upon this particular topic.

You say "the present administration is a disgrace to the state." In what respect, sir? I challenge your statement and defy you to prove it. You are making broad charges for a man of your pretensions—charges which you have no right to make unless you have the evidence to sustain them. If you have that evidence we have a right to see it and we demand it at your hands.

You claim that this administration has not enforced the prohibitory law. You pose before the people of this state as a radical prohibitionist. You insist in public upon the enforcement of law and the punishment of offenders. Per-

mit me to ask you a few questions upon this subject.

When the police force of this city undertook to break up the Topeka club, the most aristocratic joint in this city, did you approve of their attempt? Did you, as a true prohibitionist and as a minister of the gospel might be expected to do, come to the support of the police force and join your influence with that of these officers to suppress that high-toned joint, or did you join with others, some of them ministers too, in condemning that undertaking? When your good Judge Johnson and Judge Hazen, with Judge Humphrey called in to divide the responsibility, released the members of that club who had been arrested, and of whose guilt no one familiar with the facts can doubt—released them upon a mere technicality of their own invention, did you, or did you not, approve of this act? When these same judges in their judicial decision in that case went so far as to map out a plan by which clubs of this character might supply their members and their friends with liquors and escape the penalties of violated law, did you, or did you not, approve of that decision? The Christian people and the prohibitionists of Kansas would like to know your position in this matter.

Some time in January last three men were arrested charged with violation of the prohibitory law at Hiawatha, Brown county, who pleaded guilty to the charge and received the sentence which the law imposes. I find that you were one of the men who sought pardon for these offenders of this governor whom you now denounce for his failure to enforce the prohibitory law. I find the following letter to him respecting these cases:

"TOPEKA, KAN., February 5, 1894.

"His Excellency, the Hon. L. D. Leawelling, Governor of Kansas:

"MY DEAR SIR:—I understand that an application for pardon, is being made to you in the cases of L. R. Yates, Messrs. Pottenger and Pyle of Hiawatha, Kas. Dr. Yates is a prominent and useful member of the Methodist church of that place, was a neighbor during the time I was pastor of that church, and is in every way an estimable and correct gentleman. Messrs. Pottenger and Pyle lived near me at the same time and are staunch and solid citizens. While these gentlemen have been guilty of the violation of a law whose regular and consistent enforcement I am very anxious about, I feel it a duty to say that this is in my opinion a fair case for the exercise of executive clemency, and that I am anxious to see it done.

"From all that I know of the parties personally, and can hear of this special matter through trustworthy persons, it is clear to me that the guilt of these gentlemen is of the letter and not of the spirit of the law.

"Further than this I am informed that this conviction, unless pardon be granted, carries with it loss of membership in the state board of pharmacy, which to all intents and purposes, drives the parties out of business it has required them many years to establish. I do not believe the prohibitory law, or common justice, requires any such sacrifice of well-meaning and generally law-abiding citizens. Their prompt and unconditional pardon would give me great pleasure.

A. S. EMBREE."

Now, sir, permit me to ask if the crime of selling liquor in defiance of law is any less when the deed is done by a member of the Methodist church than when done by a mere ordinary heathen? Do you, as a Methodist minister, plead membership in your church as a ground of pardon for this offense? If so, no

doubt the whole fraternity of jointists could be induced to join your church with very little effort.

In two of the cases under consideration, you plead for pardon on the ground that the criminals "are staunch and solid citizens;" that is, I apprehend, they are men of some wealth and standing in society—like the members of the Topeka club, for instance. You say you are very anxious about the "regular and consistent enforcement" of the prohibitory law. Are we to understand that when the penalties of its violation are visited upon the poor, while the wealthy and especially members of the Methodist church are granted immunity, that this is your idea of the "regular and consistent enforcement" of the law? Would you, sir, have interested yourself for the pardon of these offenders if they had been poor men, who perhaps, might have engaged in this illegal traffic as a means to buy bread for hungry children? You charge this administration with failure to enforce the prohibitory law. A part of the process of its enforcement is the punishment of offenders, and you, a Methodist minister and a prohibitionist, are recorded as one who has urged this very administration to do the thing for which you now condemn it.

Again you say "the Populists have ruined the financial interests of the state." Are you quite sure of it? Are you not aware that the financial institutions of this state passed through the panic of 1893 with probably less embarrassment than those of any other state in the union? Are you not aware that Eastern holders of the bonds of this state, negotiated under republican administration at 7 per cent., and now about to mature, have offered this Populist administration to renew these bonds at 4 per cent? Does this look like ruin of our financial interests?

If you refer to the discredit of certain classes of Kansas securities then I have a few conundrums to propose to you concerning them. Did you ever hear of a prominent Methodist minister and a good republican engaged in loaning money in this city who made use of his sacred calling to secure money from Eastern capitalists, and who swindled them at that end of the line while he swindled the people of Kansas at this end, and all the time preached the gospel of Methodism and republicanism to the dear people?

Look up the record of the Western Farm Mortgage company of Lawrence, the Howard state bank of Howard, Elk county, the Leobold Fisher Mortgage company of Abilene, the E. B. Parcell company of Manhattan, the Davidson Loan company of Wichita, the Shewalter Mortgage company of Wellington, the Equitable Mortgage company of Wichita, Angell, Matthewson & Co. of Parsons, and the several hundred other similar institutions that have been organized in Kansas during the last ten years. Examine into their methods, ascertain, if you do not know it now, that in many of these institutions, the eastern investors in their stock have not only lost their investments, but are now being called upon to pay legal liabilities of an additional amount equal to their original investment. Go farther and ascertain the fact that these institutions were all managed by good, straight, orthodox republicans, that when they went east to sell their stock and to negotiate for money they carried with them the indorsement and recommendation of Kansas republican state officials, members of congress and United States senators. Go still further and ascertain the fact that a large proportion of these

great republican financial institutions were organized with the express purpose of swindling eastern capitalists at one end of the line and the people of Kansas at the other. Can you conceive of the possibility that such institutions as these may have had something to do with bringing certain of our financial transactions into disrepute?

Inquire into one more matter relating to our credit as a state. Are you aware that there have been in this city a conscienceless set of republican newspaper scribblers who have for four years been representing the people of Kansas as repudiators and blood-thirsty anarchists watching for a favorable opportunity to upset the government and raise *hades* in general? Are you aware that Kansas republican newspapers have filled their columns day after day with this same vile slander of an honest and industrious and law-abiding people? Are you aware that the republican campaign now in progress is the most vile, the most obscene, the most malicious, the most damnable that human depravity is capable of inventing? Can you conceive that such things as these tend to bring discredit upon the state? Finally permit me to ask you if, as a pretended minister of the gospel, you can justify yourself and satisfy your own conscience for making such charges as you have made against the People's party and this administration without first making a full and fair investigation of all the facts, which you confess you have not done in this case?

I will not add to the length of this letter by any criticism of your remarks upon the question of equal suffrage because I consider your conclusions unwarranted and entirely unworthy of serious comment. It would be a sad commentary indeed upon the intelligence of the women of your congregation, for example, were it a fact that they have so little judgment of their own that they would permit their votes to be controlled by your advice, especially if that advice is based upon no better reason than you have found for the statements made in your interview. As one of your Methodist sisters takes occasion to remind you in reply to your interview, "the day of belief or faith in the infallibility of the priesthood is past," and the preacher now is regarded even by the members of his church merely as an ordinary mortal—a very ordinary one in many instances—whose advice is worthy to be accepted so far as it is reasonable and fair, and above all bears the impress of sincerity and honesty. I, as a staunch friend of equal suffrage, have too much faith in the intelligence and the judgment of the women of Kansas to attribute to them the weakness with which you are pleased to credit them. If such is the character of the women of your acquaintance, you are very unfortunate in the female society in which your lot has been cast. Very truly yours,

S. McLAULIN.

HOW THEY AGREE.

SPOKANE, WASH., Sept. 30.—The Washington state republican convention had a tilt over the silver plank in the platform. The convention was evenly divided on this subject and reported two resolutions. They were discussed for three hours. One or two amendments were voted down and finally the free-silver plank was defeated by a vote of 261 to 224.

What is the genuine, simon-pure, sure-enough republican doctrine on this subject, anyhow?

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